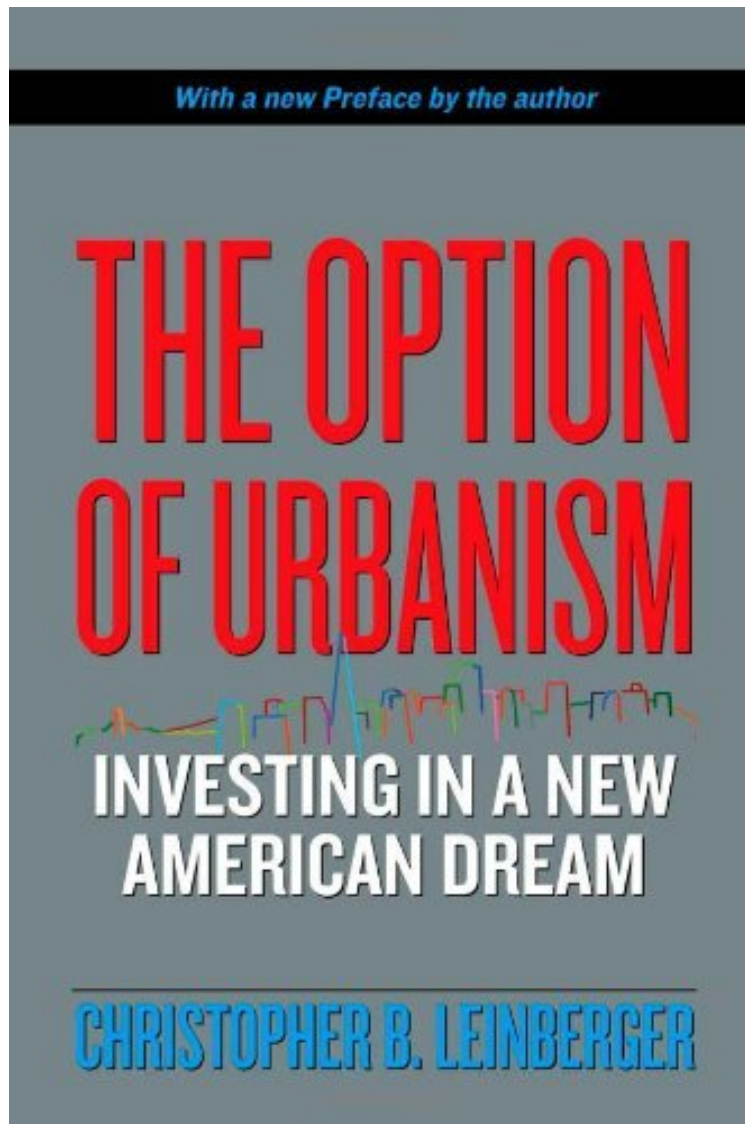


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The Option of Urbanism: Investing in a New American Dream

Christopher B. Leinberger

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Christopher B. Leinberger : **The Option of Urbanism: Investing in a New American Dream** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Option of Urbanism: Investing in a New American Dream:

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. A fair treatment of urbanism and suburbanism By Jason Stokes I've drunk the urbanist Kool-Aid, for sure. However, I was very pleased that this book presents both sides of the argument between walkable urbanism and driveable suburbanism. The author, who is a real estate developer and expert, goes through the benefits and drawbacks of each with some fairness, though he seems to prefer the urbanism argument. I particularly liked his framing of the situation in terms of demographics, social policy, and long term effects, and how

he posits that perhaps we've gone too far down the suburban path and need to swing back toward walkable urbanism. His arguments describe how Wall Street, large developers, and government policy lead us toward suburban development, and why urban areas are so expensive (longer term building timelines, more expensive land, and most of all, lack of supply.) I highly recommend this for anyone unfamiliar with walkable urbanism, or who might be interested in why our built environment is the way it is. It's a pretty short book but well written and researched, and certainly more even-handed than Kunstler or Kotkin. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A New turn for the Old By Ravi Madhavan Christopher B. Leinberger's book put a name to a desire I have had in my search to find a new home. I wanted a place where my family had the option of walking to most of the day to day places we tend to visit - school, post office, drug store, grocery store, barber, dry cleaning, coffee shop, bookstore, etc. It turns out the name for this is "walkable urbanism" - it's a return to an older time (pre-car) neighborhood, in terms of property value it has a premium compared to drivable suburbanism and there is a small movement making it more popular. This book from a real estate professional offers a logical and positive view of "walkable urbanism" without bashing drivable suburbanism that has dominated the landscape for the past fifty years. It provides a historical context to how we got to where we are and why the next phase will be a return to "walkable urbanism". The benefits to mitigating climate change and eliminating dependence on foreign oil are obvious. However the additional benefits of personal health and feeling a part of a community are also just as appealing. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Visionary! By Pierre Gauthier This book could very well be the 'Death and Life of Great American Cities' of the 21st century! The author, a specialist in real estate development and not in urban planning, explains how government policies and standardized real estate products have supported the growth of drivable suburbia over the past decades. He demonstrates with refreshing arguments that 'walkable urbanism' is actually favoured by a large portion of the population and challenges the market and governments to respond accordingly. This concise, well-written eye-opener is light-years away from the rehashed New Urbanism discourses and should absolutely be read by all concerned with the future of our cities!

Americans are voting with their feet to abandon strip malls and suburban sprawl, embracing instead a new type of community where they can live, work, shop, and play within easy walking distance. In *The Option of Urbanism* visionary developer and strategist Christopher B. Leinberger explains why government policies have tilted the playing field toward one form of development over the last sixty years: the drivable suburb. Rooted in the driving forces of the economy—car manufacturing and the oil industry—this type of growth has fostered the decline of community, contributed to urban decay, increased greenhouse gas emissions, and contributed to the rise in obesity and asthma. Highlighting both the challenges and the opportunities for this type of development, *The Option of Urbanism* shows how the American Dream is shifting to include cities as well as suburbs and how the financial and real estate communities need to respond to build communities that are more environmentally, socially, and financially sustainable.

In his new book, the latest of his significant contributions to New Urbanism, Christopher Leinberger says American development comes in two basic patterns: "drivable sub-urbanism" and "walkable urbanism." Leinberger's aim is to show how these two kinds of development function and to explain why it's in everyone's interest to make sure that walkable urbanism becomes more commonplace.